

State of Minnesota  
County of Brown

District Court  
5th Judicial District

Prosecutor File No. 4247-19  
Court File No. 08-CR-19-89

**State of Minnesota,**

Plaintiff,

vs.

**DUANE ARDEN JOHNSON DOB: 03/16/1960**

18151 Sperl Ave. S. PO Box 129  
Searles, MN 56084

Defendant.

**COMPLAINT**

Order of Detention

The Complainant submits this complaint to the Court and states that there is probable cause to believe Defendant committed the following offense(s):

**COUNT I**

**Charge: Criminal Neglect**

Minnesota Statute: 609.233.1a(1), with reference to: 609.233.3(1)

Maximum Sentence: 10 years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, or both

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 01/24/2019

Control #(ICR#): 19000635

Charge Description: On or about January 24, 2019, in Brown County, the Defendant, Duane Arden Johnson, was a caregiver of a vulnerable adult and deprived the vulnerable adult of necessary food, clothing, shelter, health care or supervision, when the Defendant was reasonably able to make the necessary provisions and the Defendant's conduct resulted in great bodily harm to the vulnerable adult.

**COUNT II**

**Charge: Receiving Stolen Property**

Minnesota Statute: 609.53.1, with reference to: 609.52.3(1)

Maximum Sentence: 20 years in prison, a \$100,000 fine, or both

Offense Level: Felony

Offense Date (on or about): 01/24/2019

Control #(ICR#): 19000635

Charge Description: On or about January 24, 2019, in Brown County, the Defendant, Duane Arden Johnson, received, possessed, transferred, bought or concealed any stolen property, knowing or having reason to know that the property was stolen and the property was a firearm.

**STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

Your Complainant is a licensed peace officer employed by the Brown County Sheriff's Office. In this capacity, your Complainant believes the following to be true and correct.

On January 24, 2019, at 11:44 a.m., Brown County Sheriff's Deputy Jason Fairbairn received radio traffic from Brown County Dispatch of a deceased person at 18151 Sperl Ave, Searles, in Brown County, Minnesota. Deputy Fairbairn proceeded to that location along with several officers from the Brown County Sheriff's Office, New Ulm Police Department and BLRR Drug Task Force.

Upon arriving at the location, Deputy Fairbairn immediately noticed the front screen door of the residence had the words "Death Parde God Hell" in red spray paint. An individual, identified as the Defendant, Duane Arden Johnson (DOB: 03/16/1960) swung open the screen door and appeared to be naked. The Defendant, yelled, "My wife is dead upstairs." The deputy asked Defendant why he wasn't wearing clothes and Defendant replied, "I need to wash this stuff off of me." The Defendant then turned around and ran back into the house.

Deputy Fairbairn approached and called out, at which time the Defendant yelled, "I'm in the bathtub so you have to come in here." The Defendant was located in the bathtub in the bathroom on the main floor. While waiting for back up, the Defendant stated that his wife was "shaking so violently" and he "couldn't stand seeing her flop around anymore." When asked why he didn't call an ambulance for his wife, he stated because the last time she was taken to the New Ulm Medical Center, "them mother fuckers revived her" and "them mother Fuckers in New Ulm made my life shit." Defendant went on to inform the deputy that he had to take a bath with soap and bleach to get rid of the little white and black "things" coming from his skin. The deputy did not notice white or black excretions coming from Defendant's skin.

Upon the arrival of other officers, the body of Debra Lynn Johnson, (DOB: 06/01/1949), was located at the top of a narrow stairway. Her body was wrapped tightly in a gray bed sheet from head to toe and fasted with what appeared to be a belt. The Defendant was asked if that was his wife, Debra, upstairs wrapped in the bed sheet, and he replied, "Yeah." He was asked why he wrapped her in the bed sheet and he replied, "I prepared the dead like the bible told me to do." The Defendant then stated that he was following the ways of the Old Testament by "cleaning her, making her beautiful and wrapping her in linen." Officers had checked for vitals and did not detect a pulse, and noted some onset of rigor mortis in the arms. However, officers noted her body appeared to be warm to the touch.

Deputy Fairbairn asked the Defendant about the paint on the front door. The Defendant stated that he had promised to take care of Debra Johnson and that she had been "flopping" around for two days and that she could not eat or drink. He stated that he had been holding her tight to keep her from hurting herself on the floor. He indicated that Debra Johnson had been in a nursing home and that she begged him to get her out because she wanted to die at home. The Defendant stated that Debra Johnson couldn't sleep because she was shaking so bad. He reported that he couldn't stand to see her suffer anymore and that he had promised her a party. He said he didn't want her to hear him crying so he turned up the music real loud and that they had been "rocking out" for three days. The Defendant then stated that Debra Johnson did not want him to call 911 as she did not want to be in pain anymore. Defendant stated that he didn't mind taking care of Debra Johnson but that he couldn't stand to see her suffer anymore.

During the interview the Defendant said, "I'm an idiot, I'm a moron, I don't need...I can't lie because I'm too stupid to plan ahead and lie." The Defendant then stated "I tell the truth and no one believes what I say when I tell the truth." He stated he had a "death party" for his wife, Debora, because that's what she requested. He said the "death party" started about 5 days ago and consisted of him playing rock music, especially

their favorite song by Quiet Riot "Metal Health" really loud while holding her in their bed in the event she happened to shake or convulse. He stated he would randomly go outside to get snow to give to Debora Johnson as the equivalent to the ice chips people receive while at a hospital. He said he would also go downstairs from time to time and turn the music up even louder so she wouldn't hear or see him cry. Defendant stated he thought his wife passed away around 8:00 a.m. that morning. Upon asking him again why he didn't call the sheriff's office immediately upon his wife passing away, his response was different than the previous time he answered. This time he stated, "I wanted to make sure she was dead." He stated that his wife wanted to die and she even went as far as to disable the phones in the residence to avoid him from calling an ambulance.

The Defendant referenced the Old Testament often and stated he didn't assist his wife in her death and that he only wanted her to be comfortable. He stated he was in less pain now that his wife had died because God had given him mercy and relieved some of his pain.

During the investigation, officers contacted the New Ulm Medical Center for information regarding Debra Johnson's medical conditions. Officers were informed that Debra Johnson had two previous cardiac arrests, issues with high blood pressure, and diabetes. Officers learned that Debra Johnson had been to the NUMC about one week ago, and that it was noted that her diabetes was not under control, her vitals were OK, and that she was taking some prescription medication for a mental illness. Officers further learned that Debra had Affective Disorder, and was hospitalized once for manic symptoms. She had been prescribed anti-psychotic medication and in September of 2018 Licensed Social Worker Chelsie Polzin was involved in setting up care for Deborah Johnson at Meeker Manor Transitional Care. However, the Defendant removed her from that care contrary to medical advice.

Later on January 24, 2019, BCA Special Agent Michael Anderson conducted recorded interviews with the Defendant at the Brown County Law Enforcement Center. The Defendant confirmed that he and Debra Johnson are married and that they live together in the residence in Searles, MN. He stated that he and Debra Johnson are the only two people who reside at the residence.

The Defendant stated that his wife has diabetes and that she is on an insulin pump. He stated that his wife had told him she did not want to go back to a hospital or a nursing home and that she did not want him to get her medical aid if something happened to her. He stated that Debra's insulin pump had continued to fall out and that he was monitoring her insulin and giving her insulin directly related to managing her diabetes. Officers were informed by medical professionals that improper injection of insulin could result in a medical emergency.

The Defendant described that his wife's health had been deteriorating in recent days and that she had quit drinking fluids approximately 2 days ago. He further stated that he had put some snow in her mouth to wet her mouth so she wouldn't have a dry mouth. He stated that Debra had been shaking or trembling in the days leading up to her death. He stated that he was trying to help his wife pass peacefully into death.

The Defendant reported that Debra had wanted him to have sex with her before she died so he accommodated that request. He indicated that he and Debra had penile/vaginal intercourse in the residence and that after they were finished she was no longer trembling and was more at peace. He stated that his wife couldn't speak when they had intercourse but that her body had told him that she was enjoying it and that afterwards she was peaceful. SA Anderson asked how long after they had sexual intercourse until Debra passed away and Defendant indicated that it was about 1 1/2 hours. He reported again that after Debra passed away, he washed her with a wash cloth and wrapped her in a sheet as per the Old Testament.

Defendant stated that he fulfilled his promise to his wife that he would not let her die in a nursing home. He

also stated that he had been using methamphetamine for several days and that he had also given some methamphetamine to his wife approximately 2 1/2 days ago. He indicated that his wife had smoked the methamphetamine and that she wanted to “party” before her death. Defendant indicated that he thought his wife may have passed away around 8:30 a.m. that morning. Defendant reported that Debra is on numerous prescription medications, but that she had not been taking them for a few days since she had quit eating and drinking.

The Defendant again indicated that his wife had “disabled” the telephones so that he could not call 911. However, during an examination of the residence, it did not appear that the telephones were inoperable.

During a subsequent interview with Investigator Jeremy Reed, the Defendant admitted that he was in possession of at least 47 guns at the residence, many of which were stolen. During a search of the residence officers located the following items:

- \* Two unopened boxes, each containing 50- .22LR Winchester brand Wildcat 22 rounds.
- \* Clear plastic case containing 89- .22LR Winchester brand Super X rounds.
- \* Clear plastic case containing 45- .22WMR Maxi Mag brand rounds, no brand.
- \* Open box containing various loose .22WMR. Box is labeled Winchester Super X.
- \* Open red box labeled Master Mag 22, this box was determined to not contain any ammunition.
- \* Unopened white box labeled as containing 50- 9mm American Eagle brand pistol rounds.
- \* Two, open blue boxes labeled as containing 50- 9mm Black Hills Ammunition brand pistol rounds, partial box of loose ammo.
- \* Unopened white and red box labeled as containing 25- 16 ga. Federal brand field load shotgun shells.
- \* Unopened white box labeled as containing 50- 9mm Minnesota Shooters Supply remanufactured pistol rounds.
- \* Two open boxes labeled as containing 50- 9mm Olin Winchester brand pistol rounds, partial box of loose ammo.
- \* Unopened box labeled as containing 12- 12ga. Remington brand buckshot shotgun rounds.
- \* Open box labeled as containing 20- 44 Mag Remington brand rifle rounds, these appeared to be spent casings.
- \* Open box labeled as containing 20- 30-40 Krag, Winchester brand rifle rounds, six of these were spent casings.
- \* Open box labeled as containing 20- 30-40 Krag, Winchester brand rifle rounds, all of these were spent casings.
- \* Open box labeled as containing 20- 30-40 Krag, Remington brand rifle rounds, three of these were spent casings.
- \* Unopen box labeled as containing 20- 30-40 Krag, Winchester brand rifle rounds.
- \* Unopened box labeled as containing 20- 30-06 Springfield, Remington brand rifle rounds.
- \* Opened box containing 17- 30-06 Springfield, Remington brand rifle rounds.
- \* Opened box containing 20- 30-06 Springfield, Peters brand rifle rounds, ten of these were spent casings.
- \* Unopened box labeled as containing 20- 7mm Mauser, Remington brand rifle rounds.
- \* Opened box containing 19- 7mm Mauser, Federal brand rifle rounds, four of these were spent casings.
- \* Henry Cal .22 Magnum Rifle Serial # GB010180M
- \* Marlin Model 39A 22 Rifle #N12425
- \* Springfield & Savage Arms Model 120A .22
- \* Connecticut Valley Arms 54 Caliber Muzzle Loader
- \* Sportsmen Long Range, Harrington & Richardson Inc. 10 gage model 176 shotgun
- \* Springfield Model 67H 12 gage Serial # A237329
- \* Novo Log Insulin Aspert 100 ml/100 units
- \* Black container with white lid, unidentified pills,
- \* Prescription bottle Benztropine Mesylate (Deborah L Johnson)

- \* Prescription Hydralazine (Deborah Johnson)
- \* Prescription bottle (Empty) Benzotropine Deborah Johnson

Debra Johnson meets the definition of a vulnerable adult pursuant to Minnesota Statute degree 609.232, subd. 11(4). The Defendant meets the definition of a caregiver pursuant to Minnesota Statute degree 609.232, subd. 2.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 609.49, intentional failure to appear for duly scheduled court appearances may result in additional criminal charges, and in addition to any arrest warrant that may otherwise be issued by the Court.

**SIGNATURES AND APPROVALS**

Complainant requests that Defendant, subject to bail or conditions of release, be:  
(1) arrested or that other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court; or  
(2) detained, if already in custody, pending further proceedings; and that said Defendant otherwise be dealt with according to law.

Complainant declares under penalty of perjury that everything stated in this document is true and correct. Minn. Stat. § 358.116; Minn. R. Crim. P. 2.01, subds. 1, 2.

**Complainant**

Jeremy Reed  
Investigator  
15 S Washington St  
New Ulm, MN 56073  
Badge: 334

Electronically Signed:  
01/25/2019 04:03 PM  
Brown County, Minnesota

Being authorized to prosecute the offenses charged, I approve this complaint.

**Prosecuting Attorney**

Charles W. Hanson  
Brown County Attorney  
1 South State Street  
PO Box 248  
New Ulm, MN 56073-6692  
(507) 233-6688

Electronically Signed:  
01/25/2019 03:52 PM

**FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

From the above sworn facts, and any supporting affidavits or supplemental sworn testimony, I, the Issuing Officer, have determined that probable cause exists to support, subject to bail or conditions of release where applicable, Defendant's arrest or other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court, or Defendant's detention, if already in custody, pending further proceedings. Defendant is therefore charged with the above-stated offense(s).

**SUMMONS**

THEREFORE YOU, THE DEFENDANT, ARE SUMMONED to appear on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM before the above-named court at 14 S State St, New Ulm, MN 56073-0248 to answer this complaint.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR in response to this SUMMONS, a WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST shall be issued.

**WARRANT**

To the Sheriff of the above-named county; or other person authorized to execute this warrant: I order, in the name of the State of Minnesota, that the Defendant be apprehended and arrested without delay and brought promptly before the court (if in session), and if not, before a Judge or Judicial Officer of such court without unnecessary delay, and in any event not later than 36 hours after the arrest or as soon as such Judge or Judicial Officer is available to be dealt with according to law.

*Execute in MN Only*

*Execute Nationwide*

*Execute in Border States*

**ORDER OF DETENTION**

Since the Defendant is already in custody, I order, subject to bail or conditions of release, that the Defendant continue to be detained pending further proceedings.

Bail: \$  
Conditions of Release:

This complaint, duly subscribed and sworn to or signed under penalty of perjury, is issued by the undersigned Judicial Officer as of the following date: January 25, 2019.

**Judicial Officer** Robert Docherty  
Judge of District Court

Electronically Signed: 01/25/2019 04:10 PM

Sworn testimony has been given before the Judicial Officer by the following witnesses:

**COUNTY OF BROWN  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

**State of Minnesota**

Plaintiff

vs.

**Duane Arden Johnson**

Defendant

**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER RETURN OF SERVICE**  
*I hereby Certify and Return that I have served a copy of this Order of Detention upon the Defendant herein named.*

Signature of Authorized Service Agent:

**DEFENDANT FACT SHEET**

**Name:** Duane Arden Johnson  
**DOB:** 03/16/1960  
**Address:** 18151 Sperl Ave. S. PO Box 129  
Searles, MN 56084

**Alias Names/DOB:**

**SID:** MN86010763

**Height:**

**Weight:**

**Eye Color:**

**Hair Color:**

**Gender:** MALE

**Race:**

**Fingerprints Required per Statute:** Yes

**Fingerprint match to Criminal History Record:** Yes

**Driver's License #:**

**Alcohol Concentration:**

**STATUTE AND OFFENSE GRID**

<b>Cnt Nbr</b>	<b>Statute Type</b>	<b>Offense Date(s)</b>	<b>Statute Nbrs and Descriptions</b>	<b>Offense Level</b>	<b>MOC</b>	<b>GOC</b>	<b>Controlling Agencies</b>	<b>Case Numbers</b>
1	Charge	1/24/2019	609.233.1a(1) Criminal Neglect - Knows/reason to know deprivation will result in substantial or great bodily harm	Felony	I1156	N	MN0080000	19000635
	Penalty	1/24/2019	609.233.3(1) Criminal Neglect - Felony Deprivation resulting in great bodily harm	Felony	I1156	N	MN0080000	19000635
2	Charge	1/24/2019	609.53.1 Receiving Stolen Property	Felony	Q1230	N	MN0080000	19000635
	Penalty	1/24/2019	609.52.3(1) Theft-Firearm or Property Value Over \$35,000	Felony	Q1230	N	MN0080000	19000635